

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A computer based method for mining data from a patent-related document and displaying said data, comprising the steps of

analyzing each claim of said patent-related document; and,

5 determining how many elements are present in each claim; and,

displaying said data in a manner, which identifies the number of elements in each claim in said patent-related document.

2. A computer based method for mining data from a patent-related document and displaying said data as recited in Claim 1, wherein each claim may contain semicolon(s), and

10 wherein said step of determining how many elements are present in each claim comprises the step of counting the number of semicolons, if any, present in each claim, where the number of elements in said claim is related to the number of semicolons present in each claim.

3. A computer based method for mining data from a patent-related document as recited in Claim 2 wherein the number of elements present in each claim is determined by

15 counting the number of semicolons, if any, present in each claim, and then adding the number one to the number of semicolons.

4. A computer based method for mining data from a patent-related document and displaying said data as recited in Claim 2 wherein said step of determining how many elements are present in each claim comprises the step of determining if each claim contains a sequence of

20 ordered phrases, each said phrase identified by a letter or numeral.

5. A computer based method for mining data from a patent-related document and displaying said data comprising the steps of

identifying a preamble section of each claim in said patent-related document;

analyzing said preamble section of each claim to determine a type of invention

5 being claimed; and,

displaying said type of invention to which the patent-related document is directed.

6. A computer based method for mining data from a patent-related document as recited in Claim 5 wherein said type of invention is selected from the group consisting of article of manufacture, apparatus, method, design, plant, process, and improvement.

10 7. A computer based method for mining data from a patent-related document and displaying said data comprising the steps of

analyzing said patent-related document to determine how many citations to prior publications are included within said patent-related document; and,

displaying said number of citations.

15 8. A computer based method for determining the strength of a patent, comprising:

analyzing said patent to determine how many independent claims said patent includes; and,

assigning a strength value to said patent based upon said determination of number of independent claims.

9. A computer based method for determining the strength of a patent, comprising:  
analyzing said patent to determine how many claims said patent includes; and,  
assigning a strength value to said patent based upon said determination of number  
of claims.
- 5 10. A computer based method for determining the strength of a patent, comprising:  
identifying an exemplary independent claim of said patent;  
analyzing said exemplary independent claim of said patent to determine how  
many elements said exemplary independent claim includes, and,  
assigning a strength value to said patent based upon said determination of number  
10 of elements in said exemplary independent claim.
11. A computer based method for determining the strength of a patent, comprising:  
analyzing said patent document to determine how many citations to prior patent  
publications are included within said patent document; and,  
assigning a strength value to said patent based upon said determination of number  
15 of citations to prior patent publications included within said patent document.
12. A computer based method for determining the strength of a patent, comprising:  
analyzing said patent document to determine how many citations to prior non-  
patent publications are included within said patent document; and,  
assigning a strength value to said patent based upon said determination of number  
20 of citations to prior non-patent publications included within said patent document.

13. A computer based method for determining the strength of a patent, comprising:  
analyzing a set of other patent documents to determine how many patents in said  
set of other patent documents cite said patent, and,  
assigning a strength value to said patent based upon said determination of how  
5 many patent documents cite said patent.

14. A computer based method for ranking a set of patents according to strength,  
comprising analyzing said set of patents by consideration of objective parameter(s) of each patent  
in said group, said parameter(s) selected from the group consisting of number of claims within  
patent, number of independent claims within patent, number of citations to prior publications  
10 within each patent cited by a patent examiner, number of other patents which contain a citation to  
each said patent, number of patents owned by others which contain a citation to each said patent,  
number of elements in an independent claim of each said patent, and number of elements in an  
exemplary claim of each said patent, and number of linguistic or textual components in said  
patent.

15. A computer based method for ranking a set of patents according to strength as  
recited in Claim 14 further comprising the step of displaying said set of patents according to  
strength.

16. A computer based method for ranking a set of patents according to strength as  
recited in Claim 14 wherein said analysis of said set of patents uses a formula which assigns a  
20 weight to each of said selected objective parameters.

17. A computer based method for ranking a set of patents according to strength as recited in Claim 16 wherein said weights may be positive or negative and are settable by a user of said computer based method.

18. An apparatus for mining data from a patent-related document and displaying said data, comprising: means for analyzing each claim of said patent-related document; and, means for determining how many elements are present in each claim; and, means for displaying said data in a manner, which identifies the number of elements in each claim in said patent-related document.

19. An apparatus for mining data from a patent-related document as recited in Claim 18 wherein said means for analyzing each claim of said patent-related document comprises a special purpose computer arranged to run a computer program.

20. An apparatus for mining data from a patent-related document as recited in Claim 18 wherein said means for determining how many elements are present in each claim comprises a special purpose computer arranged to run a computer program.

21. An apparatus for mining data from a patent-related document as recited in Claim 18 wherein said means for determining means for displaying said data in a manner, which identifies the number of elements in each claim in said patent-related document comprises a special purpose computer arranged to run a computer program.

22. An apparatus for ranking a set of patents according to strength, comprising means for analyzing said set of patents by consideration of objective parameter(s) of each patent in said group, said parameter(s) selected from the group consisting of number of claims within patent, number of independent claims within patent, number of citations to prior publications within

each patent cited by a patent examiner, number of other patents which contain a citation to each said patent, number of patents owned by others which contain a citation to each said patent, number of elements in an independent claim of each said patent, and number of elements in an exemplary claim of each said patent, and number of linguistic or textual components in said  
5 patent.

23.           An apparatus for ranking a set of patent according to strength as recited in Claim  
22 wherein said apparatus comprises a special purpose computer programmed to run a computer  
program.